

Rule for Continuing Professional Competency for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors

330-X-13-.02 Continuing Professional Competency

(1) **Purpose** — In order to help safeguard life, health, and property, and to promote the public welfare, the practices of professional engineering and land surveying in Alabama require continuing professional competency in accordance with Code of Alabama 1975 Section 34-11-8 (a)(2) and this Rule.

(2) **Scope** — Each in-state and out-of-state licensee shall be required to meet the continuing professional competency requirements of these regulations for professional development as a condition for licensure renewal. Continuing professional competency obtained by a licensee should maintain, improve, or expand skills and knowledge obtained prior to initial licensure or develop new and relevant skills and knowledge.

(3) **Definitions** — Terms used in this section are defined as follows:

(a) Professional Development Hour (PDH)—A contact (clock) hour consisting of not less than 50 minutes of instruction or presentation and which further meets the requirements of these rules.

(b) Sponsor—An individual, organization, association, institution, or other entity which provides an educational activity for the purpose of fulfilling the continuing professional competency requirements of this rule.

(4) **Requirements** — To demonstrate that a licensed professional engineer or professional land surveyor maintains an acceptable level of competency, a licensee must obtain the number of Professional Development Hours (PDH) per renewal period as shown below. The requirement must be satisfied during the current renewal period except (1) for the carryover permitted, (2) PDH earned during the previous renewal period after the date of submitting the previous renewal to the Board office and (3) PDH earned in the following renewal period. Professional development hours must not be anticipated and cannot be used for more than one renewal period.

(a) A licensed professional engineer or licensed professional land surveyor must earn a minimum of fifteen PDH per annual renewal period or thirty if biennial renewal period except for the carryover permitted. The number of professional development hours which may be carried forward into the next renewal period shall not exceed fifteen whether on an annual or biennial period.

(b) A licensee who has both a professional engineer's license and a professional land surveyor's license can cross claim PDH's when course material is applicable to both licenses.

(c) All professional land surveyors are required to earn a minimum of six PDH credits on Standards for Practice for Surveying in the State of Alabama every four years. All new professional land surveyor licensees must complete this requirement within 24 months of

becoming a licensed surveyor. Credit will be given for courses taken within 24 months of obtaining licensure. Credit for these courses/seminars will count toward the annual or biennial PDH requirements.

(5) **Activities** — Continuing professional competency activities which satisfy the professional development requirement shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Successfully completing or auditing college or university sponsored courses,
- (b) Successfully completing courses which are awarded continuing educational units (CEU),
- (c) Successfully completing tutorials, short courses, correspondence courses, televised courses, or videotaped courses,
- (d) Attending seminars, in-house programs, workshops, or professional or technical presentations made at meetings, conventions, or conferences.
- (e) Teaching, presenting, or instructing as described in (a) through (d) above,
- (f) Authoring published papers, articles, books, or accepted licensing examination items, and
- (g) Receiving a United States patent.

All of such activities as described in (a) through (g) above must be relevant to the practice of engineering or land surveying and may include technical, ethical, or managerial content. The Board does not preapprove or endorse any CPC activities. It is the responsibility of each licensee to assure that all PDH credits claimed meet the requirements as specified in 330-X-13.02.

(6) **Criteria** — Continuing professional competency activities must meet the following criteria:

- (a) There is a clear purpose and objective for each activity which will maintain, improve, or expand skills and knowledge obtained prior to initial licensure or to develop new and relevant skills and knowledge.
- (b) The content of each presentation is well organized and presented in a sequential manner.
- (c) There is evidence of preplanning which should include the opportunity for input by the target group to be served.
- (d) The presentation will be made by persons who are well qualified by education or experience.
- (e) There is a provision for individual participant registration which will include information required for record keeping and reporting.

(7) **Units** — The conversion to PDH units from other units is as follows:

1 University semester hour of credit.....	45 PDH
1 University quarter hour of credit.....	30 PDH
1 Continuing Educational Unit (CEU).....	10 PDH
1 Hour of acceptable professional development education	1 PDH

(8) **Credits** — Credit for qualifying courses successfully completed which offer PDHs based on semester

hours, quarter hours, or CEUs is as specified above. All other activities permit the earning of one PDH credit for each contact hour with the following exceptions:

- (a) Successful auditing of university or college courses permits PDH credit of 1/3 that shown in (7) above.
 - (b) Teaching or instructing qualifying courses or seminars or making presentations at technical meetings can earn PDH credit at twice that of participants.
 - (c) Authorship of papers, articles, or books cannot be claimed until actually published. Receipt of a US patent cannot be claimed until the patent is actually awarded. Credit earned will equal preparation time spent not to exceed 10 PDH per publication or patent.
 - (d) The Board does not encourage meeting continuing professional competency requirements through correspondence, video, audio, or on-line courses. Course PDH may be acceptable, if the licensee can demonstrate high quality education from the course, if requested. A correspondence, video, audio, or on-line course must require the participant to show evidence of achievement and completion and/or a final graded test.
 - (e) The Board will not accept self study, regular employment including repetitive teaching of the same course without updating course material, service club meetings, equipment demonstrations, membership on Boards or Committees, enrollment without attending the course, conversational language courses for personal use, and other activities not relevant to engineering or land surveying and not educational in nature.
- (9) **Exemptions** — A licensee may be exempt from the professional development educational requirements for one of the following reasons:
- (a) A new licensee by way of examination is awarded 15 PDHs towards their first renewal.
 - (b) A noncareer military licensee serving on active duty in the armed forces of the United States for a period of time exceeding one hundred twenty (120) consecutive days in a calendar year shall be exempt from obtaining the professional development hours required during that year.
 - (c) A licensee employed as a professional engineer or professional land surveyor and assigned to duty outside the United States for a period of time exceeding one hundred twenty (120) consecutive days in a calendar year shall be exempt from obtaining the professional development hours required during that year.
 - (d) A licensee who has experienced during the past year a serious illness or injury of a nature and duration which has prohibited completing continuing professional competency requirements this past renewal period may be exempted in order to give the licensee sufficient time to recuperate and begin to earn the necessary professional development hours for the next renewal period. Supporting documentation such as a letter from a physician must be furnished to the Board. This exemption, not to exceed one renewal period, is granted as specified by the Board.
 - (e) Licensees who list their occupation as Retired or Inactive on the Board approved renewal form and who certify that they are not currently practicing engineer-

ing or land surveying shall be exempt from the professional development hours required. In the event such a person elects to return to active practice of professional engineering or professional land surveying, to include reinstating a lapsed license, professional development hours must be earned for each year exempted not to exceed the annual requirement for two years before the person returns to active practice. The hours required for reinstatement are to bring the license to active status. When the reinstated license renewal is due, the licensee will also be required to obtain the professional development hours for the renewal period.

- (10) **Comity** — Continuing professional competency requirements may be met without completing the entire renewal form if a licensee resides in another jurisdiction whose continuing professional competency requirements are acceptable to the Alabama Board and the licensee certifies in the appropriate section that all continuing professional competency and licensure requirements for that jurisdiction have been met. Out-of-state land surveyors are required to meet the requirements of a course on professional standards as outlined in 4(c) of this section. Other six hour courses on minimum technical standards are acceptable through the 2003 licensure renewal cycle.
- (11) **Forms** — All renewal applications will require the completion of a continuing professional competency form specified by the Board outlining PDH credit claimed. The licensee must supply sufficient detail requested on the form to permit audit verification, must certify and sign the continuing professional competency form, and submit it with the renewal application and fee.
- (12) **Records** — The responsibility of maintaining records which can be used to support credits claimed is the responsibility of the licensee. Records required include but are not limited to (1) a log showing the type of activity claimed, sponsoring organization, location, duration, instructor's or speaker's name, and PDH credits earned; (2) attendance verification records in the form of completion certificates, signed attendance receipts, paid receipts, a copy of a listing of attendees signed by the sponsoring organization, or other documents supporting evidence of attendance. These records must be maintained for a period of four years and copies must be furnished, if requested, to the Board for audit verification purposes. These records should not be furnished with the renewal application.
- (13) **Disallowance** — If the Board disallows claimed PDH credit after the renewal has been processed, the licensee shall have 180 days after notification to substantiate the original claim or to earn other credit to meet the minimum requirement.
- (14) **Failure to Comply** — During the renewal process if a licensee fails to furnish the required continuing professional competency form, properly completed or signed, the right to practice as a licensed professional engineer or licensed professional land surveyor in the State of Alabama will lapse on December 31.